

F

316

485

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 014 499 010 9

**\*NOTES\***

ON

**F L O R I D A**

**PREPARED WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE**

TO THE

**HOWGATE GRANT,**

ON LAKE GEORGE.



NEW YORK :

BENJ. H. TYRREL, PRINTER, 74 MAIDEN LANE.

1881.



Henry W. Howgate.

# NOTES ON FLORIDA

*PREPARED WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE*

TO THE

HOWGATE GRANT,

ON LAKE GEORGE.

NEW YORK :

BENJ. H. TYRREL, PRINTER, 74 MAIDEN LANE.

++  
1881.

6508  
103

31

# ❖ NOTES ON FLORIDA. ❖

---

## THE CLIMATE OF FLORIDA.

The climate of Florida is distinctly semi-tropical and the seasons differ radically from those of every other part of the Union. A trade wind; an alternate land and sea breeze; a dry and a wet season, and great uniformity of temperature are its prominent characteristics. The Gulf Stream, here flowing close to the coast, brings the warmth of equatorial seas, and the perpetual verdure and bloom of the tropics.

The changes of the seasons, as recognized farther North, are scarcely perceptible here. Even in mid-winter one sees around him only verdure and flowers. The deciduous trees are so few that the fall of their leaves late in the autumn or early in the winter is hardly observed. The forests are still as green as in summer; the grass is fresh in the pine openings; the yellow jessamine hangs in wreaths of golden bloom overhead; the *houstonia* and the violet nestle underfoot; and a thousand birds warble in the myrtle thickets, or among the shining leaves of the live oak and the magnolia.

Of winter, properly speaking there is none. What is called by that name closely resembles that brief season of Autumnal relenting known at the North as "Indian Summer," except that the skies are clear and blue. The atmosphere is dry and elastic, very little rain falls and cloudless days are continuous for weeks. There is an average of 250 clear days in the year and the number is proportionally greatest in the winter. Of actual rainy days, statistics show that the average is for Dec. 4.5; for Jan. 6.6; and for Feb. 3.6.

The months of March, April, May, September and October are generally pretty warm but never oppressively hot. Including them all under the head of Summer, that season, as a whole, is quite as pleasant as the winter.

The comparative coolness of the summer in Florida, contrary to the generally received opinion, is as marked a characteristic as the mildness of the winter. The thermometer often marks a higher figure in New York or Boston than in St. Augustine or Tampa. At New Smyrna, on the Atlantic coast, near the 29th parallel of latitude, the average temperature of the summer is 82°, and that of the whole year 72°.

The comparative coolness of the Florida Summer, especially on the peninsula, is owing, in a great measure, to its position between two seas. From the east it is fanned by the cool and bracing breezes of the Atlantic, and from the west by the balmy but refreshing airs of the Gulf of Mexico, both of which are distinctly felt at the centre of the State, across which they seem to chase each other back and forth.

The rainy season commences from the first to the fifteenth of July and generally continues till the middle of September, during which time it usually rains nearly every day, but seldom all day. The showers generally commence about one o'clock p. m., and are entirely over before six o'clock. They are often accompanied by heavy thunder and the most vivid lightning. The nights and mornings during this season are clear and cool.

### HEALTHFULNESS OF FLORIDA.

It is hardly necessary to discuss the general healthfulness of a State, which has become known as the great Sanitarium of the Union. There is a very general impression abroad, however, even among those who resort to it in winter, that it is hardly a safe place to live the year round. There could not be a greater mistake, when the State is considered as a whole. There are, it is true, unhealthful localities, as in every other extensive region, and, as in all new countries, the opening of the forests and breaking up of the soil, engender more or less malaria, and give rise, in constitutions duly prepared by a bad diet and unhealthful habits, for the germination of the seeds of disease, to chills and bilious remittent fevers. These fevers are of a much milder type than those of the West, but I advise no one to invite them by settling where they prevail, while there are so many unoccupied locations in various parts of the State, where they are unknown, and where no local cause of disease of any kind exists.

Of the curative effects of the climate and the open air life which it permits and encourages, in the case of consumption and other chronic diseases



of the chest and bronchial tubes, or of the digestive organs, there can, of course, no longer be any doubt. There are individuals to be found in almost every neighborhood who can bear testimony to this fact, from personal experience. Rheumatism also, generally disappears here, especially when the victim comes to stay. If you are an invalid, do not trust to a winter visit or to any number of winter visits, but make yourself a comfortable home here, either in town or country. Come here to *live*.

### ADVANTAGES OF FLORIDA.

1. A fine climate (mild in winter and not excessively hot in summer) is early always enjoyable and suitable for out-door labor and recreation.
2. Healthfulness (if suitable localities be chosen) all the year round, with no doctor's and druggist's bills to pay.
3. Cheap lands and a soil easily worked, and, when rightly cultivated, largely productive.
4. A greater variety of crops and some of them far more remunerative ones than those generally grown at the North, while at the same time the seasons permit the making of two and sometimes three crops on the same ground, within twelve months.
5. No snow, frost or cold to prevent work, at any season of the year, and no winter to provide food, forage and fuel for heating, the soil producing more or less of the first two at all seasons, and but little of the last being required, except for cooking.
6. Less expensive buildings and clothing are required and but slight protection for stock.
7. Having all seasons for work, the farmer need work no more than one-half or two-thirds of the time to produce results equal to those attained by working early and late, all the available time, at the North. One-third of the northern farmer's time and labor is required to provide for the family and stock during six or eight months of cold weather.
8. The pleasure of breathing, at all times, the pure air of heaven, instead of the deadly gasses generated in close, stove-heated rooms, and of

being surrounded, winter and summer alike, by verdure and flowers, as well as by growing food crops.

The land throughout the State is generally level, and is of no great height above the sea level. In the most northern portion it is more or less rolling or hilly, while the extreme southern portion is low and flat. The central portion is an elevated table land, through which flow large rivers which frequently widen into beautiful lakes, and in most localities is heavily timbered.

Florida lands are classified as pine lands, hammocks, lands covered with hard woods, and lastly, the swamp lands. These classes are again distinguished as first, second and third quality of pine lands; high hammocks and low ones; inland prairies; the savannahs of the coast; and the everglades. The greater portion of the State is covered with the pitch and yellow pine. The hammocks, of both kinds, are densely covered with hard woods, such as live oaks, other species of oak, hickory, ash, magnolia, green, birch, cedar, cypress and bay. The level and rolling lands, and the table lands, are mostly covered with the pitch and yellow pine. The swamp lands are more or less timbered with pine, cypress and cedar and other soft woods. The savannahs are covered with grass, with occasionally a cabbage palm tree, while the everglades are vast prairies which are more or less under water for much of the year.

Of all these lands, the poorest will produce semi-tropical fruits and fibrous plants, which have a commercial value, and in an abundance which is almost incredible. The first rate pine lands, as they are designated, are generally elevated and rolling, covered with a dark vegetable mold several inches deep, lying on a chocolate-colored sandy loam mixed with pebble and lime, and under this is clay over lime-stone rock. The timber is very regularly distributed, and is almost wholly of pitch pine, which grows very uniformly, both in size and length; straight, luxuriant grass covers the soil underneath the trees, and no undergrowth is seen except along the margins of the water courses. These lands have a durable fertility, and are well adapted to the usual agricultural products and semi-tropical fruits. They are found to withstand drouth well, and in rainy seasons, growing crops are not affected, except favorably. These lands are healthy, the water is pure, and it costs little to prepare them for cultivation. It is noticeable that the early settlers selected these lands, especially for residences and home farms, health, pure water, freedom

from insects, good soil for crops and fruit, and ease of cultivation. They produce well for years without fertilizing.

The second rate pine lands, which are also heavily timbered with pine, are more or less high and rolling, are well watered, the surface soil is not deep, are underlaid with marl, clay or limestone, and produce well for a few years: fertilized, they yield good crops of cotton, corn, cane and root crops; when properly cultivated, they are superior for semi-tropical fruits. Experienced growers have selected this class of land for groves.

The third rate pine lands consist of high rolling sandy ridges, sparsely covered with scrubby, straggling black jack and pine, and also of low, flat lands, frequently swampy, with a growth of cypress, in the rainy season often inundated; shallow ditches, however, easily drain them, and when so drained they yield fair crops, especially of rice, cane, etc. These flat lands afford good pasturage for stock, and being well timbered, are desirable for naval stores, resin, tar, turpentine, etc., as they are cheap and accessible. The trees can be profitably "bled" for turpentine, for five to seven years, then cut down for mill logs, when the land is easily brought into cultivation; the pasturage is continuous until planted.

All pine lands are favorable for health. The resinous, balsamic odor of leaf and tree, the absence of undergrowth, giving a free circulation of air, the leafy crowns of the sighing pines, giving a grateful shade from the rays of the mid-day sun, combine to fix the settler's residence in a natural park of piney woods.

The richest lands are swamp, high and low hammocks, first-class pine, oak and hickory lands; the swamp lands being similar to the bottoms or valleys of the Mississippi and other Western rivers, being of comparatively recent alluvial formation, enriched by annual additions of surface soil and vegetable debris which fill up the lower surfaces; such lands, however, have to be ditched and drained to be made permanently available, but once prepared, they will produce for all time abundantly.

Low hammocks are somewhat of the nature of swamp and hammock, producing quite as well as swamp land, but not for so long a period. The soil is deep, but requires ditching. For sugar cane they are well adapted.

High hammocks are the most sought for by the old-time planter. The land is undulating, the surface soil is of rich vegetable mold mixed with a sandy loam, a substratum of marl or clay, or both mixed, and they are

uniformly productive. They are not seriously affected by drouth or wet; once cleared, cultivation is easy; producing the various crops equally well. For diversified farming, they are reliable; small farmers generally prefer and select the first-class pine lands, and the oak and hickory lands, which are quite extensively situated in the *central portion* of the State, as they are less expensive to clear up than the hammock or swamp lands. Besides the above, there are large savannas on the coast and in the extreme southern portion of the State, which are of great extent and treeless as a Western prairie; of course, rich, but too expensive too reclaim at this time.

While all the varieties of the lands noticed may be found in every section of the State, yet the proportion varies in different sections.

The prevailing character of the soil is sandy; not the sharp silicious sand of the ocean, or the barren sandy lands of the other States; this sandy soil has more or less of loam and a large percentage of lime and organic remains, giving it much fertility.

The country is well watered, not only by its larger and smaller rivers and lakes, but by innumerable creeks and springs. Mineral springs, of great volume, are found in every portion of the State, some of such magnitude that they form navigable rivers from their source: of such are the Blue Springs, in Jackson county, in the west; Wakulla Springs, in Wakulla county, in the middle; Silver Springs, in Marion county, in the east; the very large Blue Spring on the St. Johns, in Volusia county; the Green Cove Spring, in Clay county, on the shore of the St. Johns; also Clay Spring, in Orange county. Most of these are medicinal, white sulphur, iron, &c.

Good water, so universally desired, is found easily at a depth of from eight to fifty feet, according to locality, generally from twelve to twenty feet, but, through the country, the many lakes and springs and branches afford ample supply for house and farm purposes. If cistern water is preferred, the average rainfall, being from forty eight to fifty-four inches annually, assures a supply. The distribution of rivers, creeks, lakes and springs, is not only large, but remarkably uniform throughout the State.

With the advantages of soil, climate and water, Florida presents a fertile field for the cultivation of a great range of fruits and grain, with little labor and small cash outlay.

In every month of the year the farmer may feed his family and stock from food fresh gathered from his field or garden.

Corn (maize), cotton, tobacco, sugar, rice, wheat, rye, oats, oranges, lemons, limes, cantelopes, water-melons, musk-melons, grapes, shaddock, citrons, bananas, pine-apples, tamarinds, paw-paws, pecans, almonds, plums, persimmons, apples, pomegranates, pears, quinces, peaches, olives, blackberries, strawberries, peanuts, sweet and common potatoes, turnips, peas, beets, cabbages, tomatoes, okra, egg-plant, beans, onions, cucumbers, cauliflower, asparagus and barley, comprise only a partial list of the many productions which Florida so abundantly yields.

A pamphlet issued by the authorities of the State, says: "We want population from every State in the Union, and from every country in Europe; we want the thrifty and industrious to join us in occupying and building up the vacant places in our favored State, that they may secure pleasant homes for themselves and their families. We invite them to locate and become the owners of their homes in fee-simple forever; we want them to become citizens, and have with us equal political privileges and responsibilities in all the obligations imposed upon citizens under a Republican form of government: we want persons skilled in a great variety of mechanical and agricultural pursuits, in fact, in all of the industries of life, for we have a State possessed of the requisite conditions for successful cultivation and developement.

"We want, especially, persons skilled in gardening and fruit growing; in the cultivation of tobacco, sugar and grain: we want grape, orange and olive growers, together with the whole range of semi-tropical fruits.

"We want immigrants especially that will bring along with them sufficient means and energy to enter upon business for themselves, to buy our cheap lands, become permanent residents, practical fruit growers and successful agriculturists, or who will follow some mechanical or manufacturing occupation."

To all such, a rich reward is sure and speedy.

Nowhere in the world can a poor man so easily and cheaply secure a home and competence.

The climate, soil, health, cheapness of lands, staple and special productions, easy access and egress by land and water, form of government, low taxes, a small State debt,—all present superior advantages, especially for the poor, or those in moderate circumstances, for securing a good home.

At the outset the immigrant asks, How shall I at once procure a support for myself and family? Premising that the new-comer means to work—

intends to stay—he can go to work at once and raise food from the soil.

New pine lands, broken up with the grass turned in, will grow good crops of sweet potatoes and cow peas, with but slight cultivation. These crops inclosed in fields, the grass covered soon becomes rotted, and the soil easily worked. Corn, cane, cotton may now be planted, as also vegetables, in the same field and with the crops; orange, lemon and other fruit trees may be planted, where they are to remain at regular distances apart, both ways. The vineyard may also be put out, as well as smaller fruit, about the premises. The pea-vines, with peas, will afford forage for stock: peas and potatoes for food. Succeeding the peas and potatoes, turnips and onions, beets, cabbage and similar semi-hardy vegetables may be grown from the late summer to the next late spring months, nearly the year round. The immigrant can easily gather about him hogs, which will range for their own living, potatoes being fed to them in the fall. Poultry are no care for feed or support; game and fish are to be had for the seeking. It will soon be seen that the food question is easily solved. Year by year his crops are increasing, comforts added to; he has within himself the accessories of a comfortable home. In the meantime his grove of oranges, lemons, and his vines, are growing apace; in a few short years he scents in the early spring the sweet odor of the orange bloom, sees the green fruit gradually increasing in size, and as autumn months come on, gladdens his eyes with the sight of the golden fruit which now will yield him a substantial return. It has taken less than half a score of years to make a new home which yields ample support and sure increasing income for the future.

A comfortable log house can be built for about fifty dollars, while a frame one will cost from \$250 to \$300, or more, according to the number of rooms required. Cellars are unnecessary, nor is even glass in the windows or plastering on the walls or ceilings, though these are desirable if the settler's means afford it. The house should be well set up from the ground, and the wide hall and broad piazza which is characteristic of most homes in the South, will be found to add greatly to the comfort of the settler.

The cost of clearing land is very small compared to the timbered lands of most sections, and varies with the character of the growth, and also whether the land is to be planted in orange or olive groves or in grain. Ordinary pine land can be cleared for from \$12 to \$15 per acre, while hammock land will cost from \$15 to \$25, according to the density and size of the timber.

Nearly everything that the settler requires for food can be obtained almost immediately from his land, while the ordinary necessities of life may be had at reasonable rates. A recent price list in Jacksonville, gives the following: Flour, \$4 to \$8 per barrel; bacon, \$5 per hundred pounds; sugar, 7 cents per lb., butter, 20 cents per pound; coffee, 15 to 25 cents per pound, and other prices, as well as of hardware and other goods, as cheaply as at the North. Servants are easily obtained at from \$5 to \$8 per month for house servants, and farm laborers for 50 to 75 cents per day or from \$8 to \$10 a month. Horses and mules can be bought for from \$50 to \$150, the latter being the best for all work, and are cheapest. Harness can be bought for from \$5 to \$10, and a cart will cost from \$25 to \$30. Furniture and tools can be bought as cheaply as in the North.

The most desirable lands in the whole State are found in the counties bordering along the St. Johns river, which flows northward over two hundred miles at an average distance of twenty-five miles from and parallel to the Atlantic coast. This river is rich in beautiful scenery, and is navigable for large vessels nearly to its source. At frequent intervals the broad river widens into beautiful lakes, bordered with high rolling lands, which are rich with the best timber in the State, and are well watered by numerous small streams which form a natural drainage for the luxurious soil.

Lake George, the largest of the bodies of water along the river mentioned, is about one hundred miles from Jacksonville, the capital of the State, and is some twenty-five miles long by ten in its greatest width, and is bordered on the east by Volusia county, and on the west by Orange and Marion counties.

In the two counties last named, lies a large tract of land which is situated on the west side of Lake George, near its head, and which is intersected by Juniper river. The tract is known as the Howgate Grant, and was given, in 1817, by the King of Spain, to Don Fernando de la Marza Arredondo, a distinguished Spanish officer, in recognition of long continued and valuable services in the province, and was selected in person by Don Fernando, who was familiar with the whole country.

The land so located by the noble Spaniard is now offered for settlement, and presents advantages for the agriculturist which prove the good judgment of Don Fernando. The title, which was originally a royal warrant, was confirmed to its owner when the province became the territory of the United States, in 1821.

The grant is composed of "first class pine" and "hammock" lands.

The neighboring region is generally settled by small farmers of Spanish, French and English descent, and is the most populous region of the Florida peninsula, thus affording the settler ample facilities for procuring all he may need at small prices, and a convenient market for his products.

There is no month in the year, as before stated, but that fresh and growing vegetables may be had for sale and home use, and the latter solves a considerable problem in the expense of living. The soil is so rich, and so easily worked and cultivated, that most of garden work can be done by young children of either sex, and in fact, most Florida gardens are so made. There are no frozen clods of earth to break, or rocks to remove.

A garden once put in condition is easily managed, and will produce constantly and abundantly; while the rapid growth produces large and tender vegetables, and early and luscious fruit.

A single season will yield strawberries from the setting out, and ripe figs may be had from cuttings from two year old trees; the vines will yield grapes the second year; peach trees will bear the second and third years; and oranges may be raised from the bud in from three to five years. At little cost, with little care, one can enjoy fresh plucked fruit throughout the whole year.

In January, you may plant Irish potatoes, peas, beets, turnips, cabbage, and all the hardy vegetables, and set out fruit trees and such shrubbery as may be wanted. It is also time to prepare sheltered beds for more tender vegetables, which will be more valuable for shipment to northern markets, such as tomatoes, melons, egg plant, &c.

In February, plant again as in January, so that a later crop may be had; and in addition plant all vines you wish to grow, and set out or bud your orange, lemon and olive trees, or make the necessary grafting or budding. Bed sweet potatoes for slips, and oats may be sown (as may also be done in October, November, December, January, March and April.)

In March, plant corn and all the other range of products of February, and transplant your tomato, melon, and other vines. Mulberries and blackberries are ripe in this month.

In April, plant as in the preceeding months (except Irish potatoes), turnips, &c., and the Irish potatoes will be ready to dig. In this month onions, beets, and the usual early vegetables will be ready for use on the table and for shipment to the North.



In May, plant more sweet potatoes, beans and corn. Your peas, cucumbers and other such vegetables are now fully ready for gathering, and the early corn is ready for use.

In June, sweet potatoes and peas, and other such products may again be planted (to keep up the succession) and the Irish potatoes, tomatoes, and all the range of vegetables, as well as plums, peaches and grapes, are now ripe for food.

In July, sweet potatoes and peas may be planted, and, if the season be rainy, it is well to set out orange trees. Grapes, peaches, figs, and other fruits are in full season.

August is the latest month in which sweet potatoes and peas may be planted and prosper, but is adapted for the sowing of cabbage and cauliflower seed, and especially for transplanting or budding orange trees. Toward the latter part of the month a few Irish potatoes and beans should be planted.

September, October and November, are the real gardening months in this fair land. Except sweet potatoes, you may plant nearly every vegetable which is so dear to palate and purse in the early spring in the North. Beginning in September, set out strawberry and cabbage plants, asparagus, onions, early (or garden) peas, and sow oats, barley, rye and wheat; and the same work may be continued in October and November.

In December, all the hardy vegetables and grain may be put in the ground. This is also a good month in which to plant and set out orange, lemon, olive, peach and other fruit trees.

This sketch of the ordinary routine of planting, is taken from observations based on the experience of persons living in the neighborhood of Lake George (latitude 29° 15' North), and extending over a range of many years.

The extent of this work is too constricted to attempt to give in detail the facts in relation to the wide range of the vegetable products of this favored State, which are alike valuable for manufacture or consumption, but a few deserve more than a mere passing notice.

## THE ORANGE.

This golden fruit is a native of Florida, but in its wild state is sour, or a bitter-sweet, small in size and unpleasant to the taste. These wild trees

being grafted or budded, produce in from two to five years, such enormous amounts of fruit as almost to seem incredible. The tree is also grown from the seed (bearing fruit in four years), and from cuttings, but the latter method is by no means so reliable, and in many cases bears inferior fruit.

In no way, in this state, can a small tract of land (unless the olive be excepted), be made at so small an expenditure of labor and money, to yield so large a return in so short a time. As an investment for future income, nothing is safer than an orange grove of from one to fifteen acres. Large groves are of the latter extent, though the majority of them are from five to ten acres.

The crop is sure, and after the trees begin bearing, the first two year's crop will usually pay for all expense for land, labor and trees, and a liberal amount besides for interest on the investment; and the older the trees become, up to about a hundred years, the better and surer the crop in abundance. They require care and attention, little, to be sure, but constant; and if these are given them, there is no tree in this country that shows a more rapid growth, nor any fruit-bearing tree that so soon reaches maturity. The healthy, thrifty trees have no enemies.

To make an orange grove, choose high, dry hammock, or rolling pine land that has natural drainage. The most favorable locations are in the immediate neighborhood of wide sheets of water, and more especially in the eastern and eastern central portions of the State, as these portions, from the proximity of the great ocean river, the Gulf Stream, are usually free from the occasional frost which at rare times visits the northern and western portions of the State.

The land being selected, should be well cleared of timber and then broken up. The best class of trees to obtain are those of from three to five year's growth (from seed); taken up carefully with all the roots possible, and should be packed with wet moss as soon as dug, and kept in the shade and sheltered from the wind, until ready for planting.

Dig the holes about thirty feet apart, eighteen inches deep and at least four feet across, and then fill them with top soil (to retain the moisture), if you are not then ready to set out your trees. When the tree is ready take out so much of the top soil as will leave sufficient space for the tree, and set the tree in the hole, standing in the same position in which it had been growing before, and with the roots carefully spread. Fill in the soil gently under and around the roots (by hand is by far the best), and this

should be gently tramped down, when filled to the surface. Then throw on some two or three inches of top soil, to prevent drying, and leave this until the wet season sets in, when the earth should be leveled off. The ground between the trees should be well broken up, and lightly cultivated, and it is well to sow with "cow" (or field) peas, which may be done before or after planting the trees. Other vegetables, or grain may be raised between the rows of trees, leaving a liberal space vacant around each.

Ten acres of well grown trees, in five years from planting, will have cost a settler, including land, clearing, fencing, trees, labor, taxes, and everything, about one thousand eight hundred dollars in all, as follows :

## COST OF GROVE

* Ten acres of land,	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$100 00
Cutting timber, clearing,	-	-	-	-	-	-	150 00
Fencing (post and board fence), and breaking up.	-	-	-	-	-	-	150 00
Six hundred trees, and setting out,	-	-	-	-	-	-	400 00
Manures, labor, cultivating, taxes, etc., for five years,	-	-	-	-	-	-	1000 00
Total,	-	-	-	-	-	-	\$1800 00

Such a grove would readily sell now in Florida for \$1,000 per acre, From and after five years the annual growth of trees and increase of fruit is constant for at least ten years, and the grove will hold its vigor and fruit-producing qualities for a century or more.

At the same time, the growth of vegetables would almost entirely have supplied his family with all necessary food, and the sale of the earlier products, such as potatoes, strawberries and berries, would yield a very considerable income.

Trees usually bear (seedlings) at four years, and average at that age, about one hundred oranges, and the next or fifth year, will each bear at least three hundred. The fruit is readily sold at the landings on the St. Johns river to shippers, at \$2 per hundred. Thus, it will be seen, that ten acres of trees (supposing six hundred trees to be planted), at the end of five years, would represent an income of at least \$3,600 per annum, less only the expense of plucking and delivering the fruit.

Every year the value of an orange tree increases, and a single tree has been known to produce from **5,000 to 7,000 oranges annually**, and it is commonly expected that a tree of ten years growth will yield at least

2,000. No orange grove in Florida can be bought to-day, where the trees have just begun to bear fruit, for less than \$1,000 per acre.

### STRAWBERRIES.

This splendid fruit yields large crops in Florida, and will bear profusely the very first season. Plants may be set out in September, frequently ripen in January and February, but are in full bearing in March and April, from two to five months earlier than at Baltimore, Washington, or New York; and are largely raised for shipment to the Northern market, in which they meet with ready sale at very profitable prices.

A gentleman residing on the St. Johns river, near Jacksonville, set out one acre of strawberry plants in November, 1875, and in less than two months (January 6, 1876), shipped ripe fruit to the North, and continued to make daily shipments until the twentieth of the next June. From that single acre of strawberry plants, he realized a net profit of over \$1,200 in less than eight months.

During the past fall, a number of strawberry growers made contracts in advance for their whole crops, at thirty-five cents per quart.

### THE OLIVE TREE

has been introduced into the State but comparatively a few years; but the success attending its culture has astonished even those experimenting with it. The tree is grown from the seed, in which case it begins bearing in about ten years, or may be propagated by cuttings or grafting, and by budding with the small knots called *waroli*, which contain embryo buds in little swellings along the bark of the older tree, when the young trees will bear at six years of age. From the first bearing the yield increases annually, until about thirty years old, and remains in full vigor for hundreds of years.

The tree in full vigor yields on an average of two to three bushels of fruit, which will produce from fifteen to twenty pounds of oil, which meets with ready sale at a handsome profit.

The fruit is greedily eaten by cattle, sheep, hogs and poultry, and it would pay handsomely to cultivate the tree even for this purpose. Poultry especially are very fond of the fruit, which produces a delicious flavor in the meat.

In making a grove of olive trees, the plants should be set out in rows, as apple trees are planted, and an acre of ground should contain about one hundred trees. Crops may be raised between the trees, and if sheep be raised, it is found to benefit the trees by herding the sheep in the enclosure.

It is a branching, evergreen tree, of slow growth, but is hardy (more so even than the orange), and will prosper even in barren soil.

### GRAPES.

All varieties, both American and foreign, are easily grown in all parts of the State, ripening from June till November. The St. Augustine, a native grape, is a choice grape for wine making or eating. The Scuppernong in all its varieties, is largely cultivated, being a rapid grower, bears abundantly, is long lived, and requires but little pruning or care. The black Hamburg and the California Mission grape are among the best and most rapid varieties in obtaining maturity. The Scuppernong is found most profitable for export, for table use, or making wine.

### MELONS, &C.

The Northern man or European, whose idea of large products of the melon and squash families, has been formed from viewing the prize melons, pumpkins and squashes of agricultural exhibitions is astonished at the enormous growth attained by such fruits in Florida. It is no rare thing to see water melons as large as a nail keg, and of seventy pounds weight; musk melons of twenty to thirty pounds; and pumpkins and squashes will often weigh one hundred pounds. Water melons, which do not weigh at least twenty-five pounds, are hardly considered salable; those of thirty to forty pounds being the average size shipped to market.

Raising melons consists in merely planting the seeds among the corn-patches, where they are left uncared for until ready for market; the best varieties only are planted, and the flavor seems more delicious, the flesh more crisp and solid than in any other country in the world. Musk melons and canteloupes are also of great size and as easily raised (in the same manner) as the water melon, and all the varieties are ready for shipment by May; the season continuing until late in August.

## SWEET POTATOES

Are as universal in the South as rice in China, macaroni in Italy, or the potatoe in Ireland, and is produced in a profusion and small expense of labor, that astonishes the visitor to Florida. White or black, no family is so poor as not to own a patch of this fine tuber. It yields all the way from one hundred bushels to the acre, on poor ground, to five hundred on good soil, where some cultivation is done. It may be had for twelve months in the year, fresh from the ground, and is grown from the roots, draws or slips. The old vines of the last crops may be pulled and cut into lengths of a foot each, when these are set in small ridges thrown up by a small shallow plow, and the patch is ready.

## BANANA, PINE APPLE. ETC.

In Florida the pine apple and banana are successfully grown: the fruit is of a finer quality, and larger size, than most imported from abroad. The banana plant is simply planted and let alone, maturing its fruit in from fifteen to eighteen months; shedding its large leaves, it dies down, and sends up suckers at its base, a single one of which perpetuates the old stock. The others may be replanted in new places. Raw or cooked, as an article of food it is very nutritious, and most people esteem its taste and flavor. No fruit is more healthy.

The pine apple is planted from the suckers or shoots of the matured fruit or main stock: it is planted at about same distance and cultivated as corn. The guava, of which there are several varieties in size, color and taste, is a rapid grower and an abundant bearer. It fruits in two years from seed, is delicious as a table fruit when ripe, and makes a superior marmalade, jelly and preserves. The sappodillo, paw-paw, sugar-apple, tamarind, date, and other similar fruits, do well in South Florida. The cocoa-nut, especially, does well on the coast and Keys, producing extra-sized fruit.

## OTHER FRUITS AND PRODUCTS.

The limit of this little work does not permit the space to dwell at length on the many other rare and luxuriant fruits, vegetables and grain, which

makes Florida the very garden spot of the world, but among them the following serve to show the wide range.

### INDIAN CORN,

is easily raised, and on the pine hammock lands, yields a large return to the acre, and requires but little cultivation; is planted from February to April and is ready for gathering in June and July.

### WHEAT, RYE, OATS, BARLEY AND BUCKWHEAT,

all do well, and under proper cultivation prosper as well as in the North. Each is sown early in the fall, and mature in early spring.

### PEACHES

are a sure and prolific crop, bearing fruit in two years from the seed, and ripen in May, June and July.

### APPLE, PEAR AND QUINCE

trees yield abundantly, and are free from disease. Apples ripen in May and June. The pear does well, and some are grown which rival the huge ones from the California trees. The quince tree attains the usual size of the apple tree and is larger than those of Northern growth.

### THE PERSIMMON

is found wild in every section of the State, and is of more pleasant taste than those grown farther North. The Japanese varieties graft easily on the native tree, and produce a fruit as large as an apple, and are free from seeds.

### JAPAN PLUMS

are much grown. The tree, in size and leaf, resembles the horse chest-

nut; the fruit is pear-shaped, and grows in large clusters; is cream colored, and is a delicious table fruit.

### THE POMEGRANATE

bush is abundant, and is largely grown for ornamental purposes, both for its beautiful pendant crimson flowers and its rich pink fruit.

### PLUMS

grow wild all over the State, and in cultivation, rival the best varieties, in size and flavor.

### MULBERRY

trees, of the different species, grow to perfection from root, cutting or draft, and are in leaf from March to October. Silk growing has attracted considerable attention, and in time, by the immigration of skilled silk raisers, the business will become a regular and profitable industry.

### THE INDIGO

plant is a native of Florida, and could be made a large source of profit.

### THE CASTOR

bean attains a size of twenty-five to thirty feet in height and bears profusely.

### PEANUTS

grow abundantly, and larger than those raised further North. Farmers frequently plant small patches in which swine are turned, they being very fond of the nut, which tends to richly flavor the pork.

### THE PECAN

tree is abundant in the forests, and is valuable for timber, as well as for its fruit.



## ALMONDS

are grown in gardens, and bear well.

The list would comprise many pages, especially of farm and garden products, but the following list of fruits, vegetables, &c., which were grown during one season on a single plantation but a short distance north of Lake George, will partially convey the desired idea, viz:

Corn, sugar cane, cotton, sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes, arrow root, pop corn, cow (or field) peas, sweet peas, jute, tea plants, peaches, tamarinds, oranges, lemons, limes, shaddock, grape fruit, figs, bananas, pine apples, cocoa nuts, persimmons, Japanese persimmons, blackberries, whortleberries, beans, strawberries, lettuce, radishes, water melons, muskmelons, canteloupes, squashes, carrots, parsnips, pumpkins, tomatoes, cabbage, onions, beets, turnips, cucumbers, celery, plums, Japan plums, pecan nuts, black walnuts, English walnuts, hickory nuts, sage, rice, tobacco, castor beans, okra, mulberries, pomegranates, cauliflower, egg plant, guava, almonds, filberts, rye, oats, wheat, barley, buckwheat, millet, apricots, apples, quinces, asparagus, citrons, oyster plant, hemp, indigo and olives; a list of seventy-seven fruits or valuable plants for manufacture or consumption.

## COST OF STOCK.

Cattle can be bought for \$15 a head, and hogs (full grown), for \$4; and none of these require to be fed, as they range in the woods and find their own food. If the calves are kept penned at home, cattle will return each night. Chickens will cost twenty-five or thirty cents a piece, and all poultry will find its own food, and requires no care.

It will be seen that in no part of the civilized world can the farmer live so cheaply, or find his labor so remunerative as in this land.

The forests are full of game (deer, turkeys, quail, &c.), and the waters are alive with ducks, geese, oysters, clams, shrimps, turtle, and almost every variety of salt and fresh water fish, and all are easily obtained.

The land, so easily worked, is almost inexhaustible in strength, and produces crop after crop in the same year. A farmer located on the St. Johns river, writes as follow: "My crops last year consisted of water melons, cabbages, beets, Irish potatoes, summer squash, snap beans, cu-

“cucumbers and tomatoes, and I succeeded in getting the first of nearly every article the first into the New York market. In addition, I raised three acres of oats and twenty acres of corn. I sent to market about 5,000 melons, 45 barrels of cabbage, 30 bushels of beets, 35 barrels of potatoes, 45 bushels of summer squashes, 50 bushels of snap beans, 450 bushels of cucumbers, and 65 bushels of tomatoes; and got fair crops of oats and corn. All of these crops except the corn, were harvested and sent to market before July 1. I also planted half an acre of sweet potatoes, which I will gather in November. Of the melons, there were thousands that were left in the field, ripening too late for profitable shipment North, and hundreds of bushels of cucumbers were also left. When I stopped picking cucumbers, I was getting 150 bushels a week.”

One man sold his whole crop of tomatoes in March last at \$9 per bushel, realizing a net profit of \$750 per acre.

Another raised 6,000 head of cabbages on one acre, and sold them at a town three miles away (in November) for eight and ten cents a head; in the next spring, on the same ground he dug 150 bushels of Irish potatoes, which sold for \$2.50 and \$3 per bushel; and in the succeeding July dug 100 bushels of sweet potatoes which sold for 60 cents per bushel (a period of less than one year); thus making at the lowest figures, a clear profit of \$915 for one acre of land.

## THE GOVERNMENT.

The present State Constitution was adopted in 1868, and is similar to those of most of the Northern States.

Foreigners who become residents, enjoy the same rights as to property, as native born citizens.

All property of a wife, whether acquired before or after marriage, is made separate to herself, and is not liable for the debts of the husband.

The free school system is firmly established throughout the State, and is supported by extensive land grants and appropriations, and by a State tax of *one mill* on all taxable property; in addition to which each county must levy a tax of one-half of one mill for the same purpose.

The whole taxes, under the State Constitution, *may not* be more than *fifteen and one-half mills* for all taxes, and may be six mills less, as decided by each county. The taxes are assessed on a valuation of from fifty cents

to \$2.50 per acre, and therefore compare advantageously with any other State in the Union, or of any country in the world.

Every male person twenty-one years of age, who shall be, or shall have declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States, has resided in the State one year, and in the county six months, may vote in the election districts where registered. Bribery, perjury, larceny, wagers on election, fighting a duel or accepting a challenge, disfranchise.

Churches of various denominations, are within easy reach of nearly every settlement, and are zealously fostered by all classes.

Population of Orange County in 1870, 2,195; in 1880, 6,190.

Population of Monroe County in 1870, 10,804; in 1880, 13,000.

The Howgate Grant is offered for sale in lots of ten acres each, at a low price and on easy terms.

For further information address,

H. W. HOWGATE,

75 Maiden Lane,

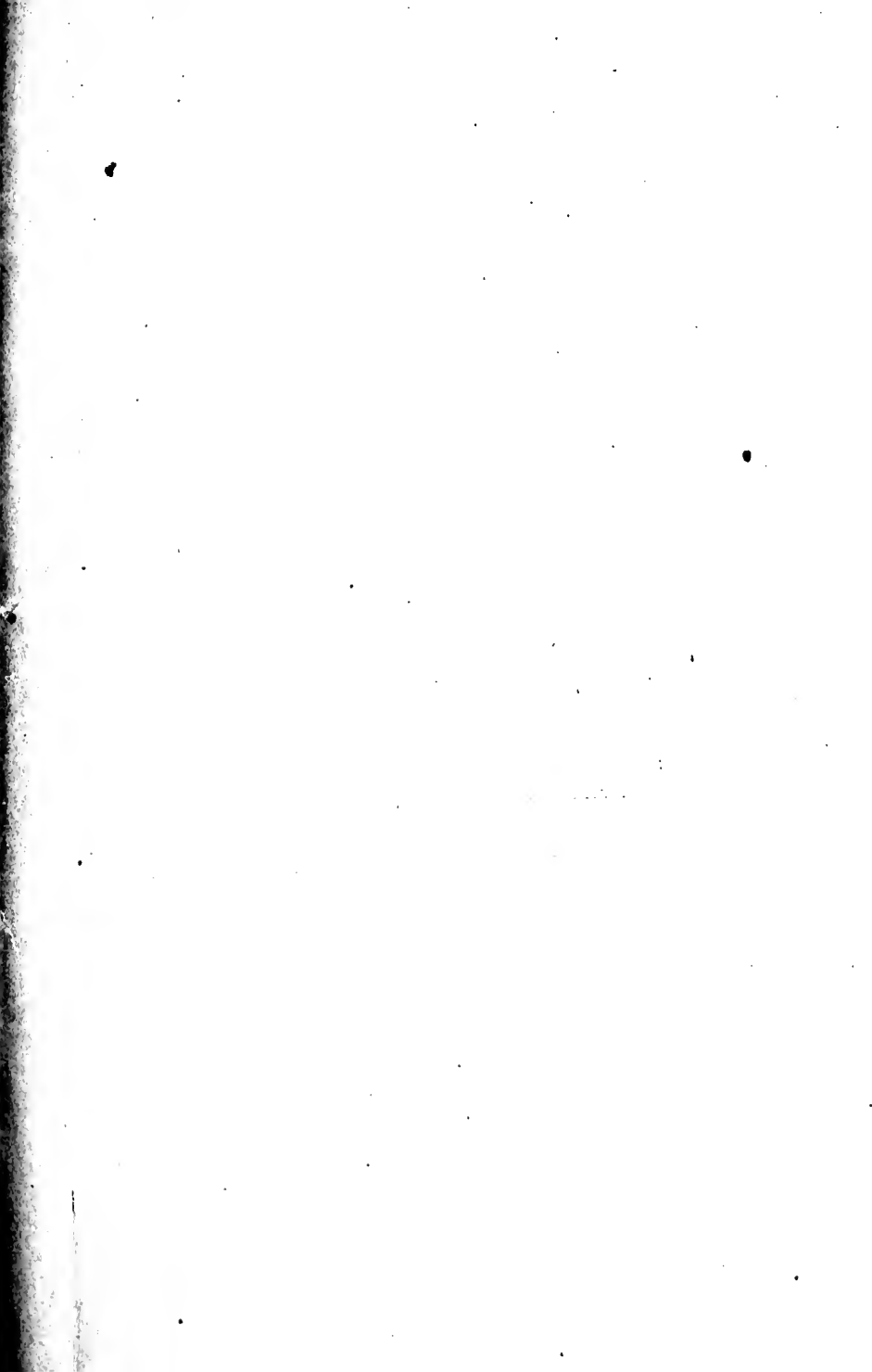
NEW YORK,

Or,

1424 New York Avenue,

WASHINGTON, D. C.







0 014 499 010 9

